

CEDAR CREEK TRAIL PROPOSED ACTION

June 12, 2014

Need: This project is expected to reduce environmental impacts caused by user-created trails and to provide sustainable, non-motorized trails on public land adjacent to Ruidoso. The user-created trails within the Cedar Creek area are steep and narrow, leading to erosion and drainage problems. This project will provide sustainable, non-motorized trails that are less likely to increase runoff and sediment in Cedar Creek, a tributary to the Rio Ruidoso.

Location: The Lincoln National Forest, Smokey Bear Ranger District, located in Southeast New Mexico. The Cedar Creek project area is located on the Smokey Bear Ranger District, T11S R13E sections 9, 16-17.

Description of Work: Construction and rehabilitation of system and user-created trails within an area known as the 'spaghetti bowl' of the Cedar Creek trail system. The currently authorized trail system consists of 3 trails that generally run close to the fall line (straight downhill). Branching off of the authorized trail system are dozens of user-created routes, characterized by 12 to 18 inch-wide unsustainable trails. Up to four miles of user-created trails will be rehabilitated. Three miles of trail will be rerouted to combine low trail-grades with relatively long sight lines (about 100 feet) and a four-foot-wide trail tread. Rehabilitation activities will include, but are not limited to, naturalizing to hide tread disturbance, ripping and seeding user created trail intersections, and physical obstructions (rocks, logs, berms, etc.). Clearing consists of trimming and removing trees, logs, limbs, branches, brush, plants, and other vegetation within the clearing limits.

This project should be completed within 90 days of Notice to Proceed.

References: All work shall conform to descriptions and specifications as Found in "*Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Trails*" (USDA Engineering publication EM-7720-103, available on the web at: <http://www.trailbuilders.org/resources/books1.html>), and as described in the Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 2309.18 Section 23.11, Exhibit 01, *Design Parameters*, Trail Class 4.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

Rehabilitation

WORK

This work consists of rehabilitating 2 to 4 miles of user-created trails. User-created trails will be rehabilitated where they intersect the proposed reroute, and are indicated on the attached map. Specific rehabilitation activities will be designated/determined by the COR and will include, but are not limited to, naturalizing to hide tread disturbance, ripping and seeding user created trail intersections, and placement of on-site physical obstructions (rocks, logs, berms etc.). Seed mix will be provided to the contractor by the Government.

Clearing and Grubbing

WORK

This work consists of clearing, grubbing, trimming and removing, trees, logs, limbs, branches, brush, plants, and other vegetation within the clearing limits. Also included are the protection from injury or

defacement of trees and other objects not designated for removal and the treatment of damaged trees (broken, hanging branches, inadvertent damage while clearing).

CLEARING LIMITS

Clear to the dimensions SHOWN ON THE ATTACHED DRAWING TITLED "*CLEARING LIMITS*" or 12" beyond the fill and backslope catch points, whichever is greater.

MATERIAL TO BE CLEARED

Remove and dispose of trees, logs, limbs, branches, brush, herbaceous plants, and other vegetation within the clearing limits, except for the following:

- a) Live, sound, and firmly rooted trees greater than 9 inches DBH.
- b) Live brush, herbaceous plants, and trees between the trailway and the clearing limits that are less than 12 inches in height and less than 3/8 inch in diameter at ground line.

Except as provided above, remove all limbs and branches more than 3/8 inch in diameter that extend into the clearing limits of the trail. Cut limbs flush with the tree trunks or stems or cut at the ground surface as SHOWN ON THE ATTACHED DRAWING TITLED "*CLEARING LIMITS*".

REMOVAL OF STUMPS

Remove all stumps within the trailbed. Remove stumps located between the edge of the trailbed and the edge of the trailway that cannot be cut flush with the finish slope or that are not tightly rooted.

DISPOSAL OF CLEARING SLASH, LOGS, BRUSH, AND ROOTS

Do not place clearing slash, logs, brush, or roots in concentrated piles. Scatter all logs, limbs, lopped tops, brush, and grubbed stumps and roots below the trailway and outside the clearing limits so as debris is not readily visible to hikers, with the following exceptions:

- (a) Where the side-slope above the trail is less than 10 percent, material may be scattered above the trail if not readily visible to hikers.
- (b) Logs may be left on the uphill side of the trail if they are placed so that they will not move into the clearing limits.

Tread Construction

WORK

Work consists of the excavation to mineral soil and placement of excavated material, regardless of its nature, from within the trailway.

Includes excavation, embankment, and backfill construction required to shape and finish the trailbed, ditches, backslopes, fill slopes, rolling grade dips, spillways, trail passing sections, and turnouts.

Protrusions may be no more than 3 inches in height. The tread will be native material with improved sections of borrow, continuous and discernible averaging 48" in width, but not less than 36" at any point.

Trail construction shall conform to Design Parameters, Trail Class 4, Hiker/Pedestrian Use. (Forest Service Handbook 2309.18)

USE AND DISPOSAL OF EXCAVATED MATERIAL

Conserve and use all suitable material for specified work. Conserve excess excavated rock suitable for specified project work and use in place of materials from designated sources.

Remove all duff and debris from within trailway limits and uniformly spread outside the clearing limits, not more than 4 inches in depth. Do not obstruct drainages or create piles, berms, or windrows of debris.

Place excess and unsuitable excavation beyond the downslope edge of the trailbed. Do not obstruct drainage and spread to a depth not exceeding 4 inches. This includes any material removed in the grubbing operation and deposited in the same area. Place rocks over 4 inches in greatest dimension not used in construction beyond the hinge point on the downslope side. Place rocks so that the tops are at least 6 inches lower than the trailbed surface. Ensure that no blockage of drainage or creation of a windrow effect occurs. Disposal of over burden material will be to a location designated/approved by the COR.

SUPPLEMENTAL SPECIFICATIONS

STAKING, FLAGGING

The Government will set initial construction stakes or flagging, and control points, and furnish the contractor with all necessary information relating to lines, slopes, and grades. These stakes and flagging constitute the field control.

WORK SITE CONTROLS

1. The trail will be constructed to Trail Class 4 Design Parameters for Hiker/Pedestrian Designed Use (see attachment). The tread will be native material with improved sections of borrow, continuous and discernible averaging 48" in width, but not less than 36" at any point.
2. Follow design guidance in the "*Standard Specifications for Construction of Trails*" (EM-7720-103) to minimize impact to water quality.
3. In the event that archaeological deposits or human remains are encountered during project implementation, all activities shall cease in the immediate area and the COR will be contacted immediately.
4. Accessing the trail during wet weather conditions may be limited, and cause unnecessary resource damage. Determination will be made by the COR to suspend actions during such times.

VEHICLE USE ON THE TRAIL

Motorbikes, ATV/UTV, mini excavators and other related type vehicles are considered trail construction equipment. Any other type of vehicle shall not be permitted unless approved in writing by the COR. Cross-country movement of equipment shall not be permitted unless approved in writing by the COR.